

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1-20 remain pending in the present application. No new matter has been added.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issues: The drawings are objected to; Claims 1-2, 16 and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as lacking novelty with respect to Ito et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,323,596, hereinafter Itoh); and Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 10-15 and 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Takashi et al. (JP 2000-357463, hereinafter Takashi) in view of "High-Luminance AC-PDP With Waffle Structured Barrier Rips", hereinafter High-Luminance.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the identification of allowable subject matter in Claims 6, 8, 9 and 17.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview extended to the Applicants' representative on July 2, 2003. During the interview, the rejections noted in the outstanding Official Action were discussed. An agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review and a response as filed. Comments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

OBJECTION TO THE DRAWINGS

Figures 20-22 were objected to as lacking the designation "Prior Art". Applicants submit herewith replacement drawing sheets adding a prior art designation to Figures 20-22.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Official Action has rejected Claims 1, 2, 16, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being unpatentable over Ito. The Official Action states that Ito discloses all of the claim limitations of the rejected rejected claims. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a plasma display panel including:

“... said plurality of cell spaces comprise a plurality of discharge cells and a plurality of non-discharge cells...”

By way of background, plasma display panels are known in which a front substrate forms a display surface and a back substrate is joined to the front substrate for forming a plurality of discharge cells therebetween. A network of bus electrodes and transparent electrodes are provided in cooperation with the plurality of discharge cells for providing an image to the front of the substrate. In operation, the plurality of discharge cells provide image data upon selection by way of the electrodes which discharge a signal through phosphor stored in the plurality of cell spaces. As the plurality of cell spaces require an exhaust path for vacuum evacuation, it is difficult to control the discharge process from leaking into adjacent cells. Further, light discharged in a specific cell may be attenuated by barrier ribs which form the cell structure.¹

In light of the above deficiency in the art, the present invention is provided. With this object in mind, a brief comparison of the claimed invention in view of the cited references is believed to be in order.

Ito discloses a planar display panel. The display includes a front glass substrate (1) as a first transparent substrate and a construction on a back glass substrate as a second substrate (10) which constitute the display panel. The display panel includes a number of display cells

¹ Application at pages 1-4.

or recesses (11) which are driven by a common electrode (2) and an individual electrode (3) to provide an image to a display area of the display panel.²

As shown more specifically in Figure 3, the display cells (11) are rectangular in shape and formed in the glass substrate opposing the common electrode and the individual electrodes which are provided on the front glass substrate. The cells define discharge spaces for including fluorescent material layers (12a-12c) in red, green and blue which are coated on the bottom surface of the corresponding recesses. An electrode leading-out through hole (13) is provided for leading out the lead pins (6) and (7) to the backside of the display screen. The through holes are bored in the black glass substrate in positions corresponding to the lead pins.³ In this way, as shown in more detail in Figure 6, upon assembly the leading out through hole receives a lead pin to avoid the prevention of a useless gap from being caused between the front glass substrate and the back glass substrate.⁴

Conversely, an exemplary embodiment of the Applicants' invention provides a plasma display panel (101) including discharge cells (9) and non-discharge cells (10). The discharge cells and non-discharge cells are arranged so that each discharge cells adjoins at least one non-discharge cell and a phosphor is applied in the discharge cells and no phosphor is applied in the non-discharge cells. This structure more effectively suppresses and prevents erroneous discharge in discharge cells induced by discharge in other discharge cells⁵

Ito does not disclose or suggest a non-discharge cell. As can be appreciated, elements 13 shown in Figure 10b of Ito simply discloses a leading-out through hole which receives lead pins for eliminating a gap in the display panel upon assembly. Accordingly, Applicants

² Ito at column 9, lines 7-33.

³ Ito at column 9, lines 55-67.

⁴ Ito at column 10, lines 29-34.

⁵ Application at page 16, lines 16-17.

respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 1 and any claims depending therefrom under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

Claims 16 and 19 recite substantially the same limitation as discussed above by virtue of dependency, therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 16 and 19 are allowable at least for the same reasons discussed above. Likewise, independent Claim 20 recites substantially the same limitations as discussed above and is therefore allowable at least for the same reason. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 2, 16, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Official Action has rejected Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 10-15 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Takashi in view of High-Luminance. The Official Action states that Takashi discloses all the Applicants' claim limitations with the exception of barrier ribs. The Official Action cites High-Luminance as disclosing this more detailed aspect of the Applicants' invention and states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references to arrive at the Applicants' claims. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants have submitted herewith a certified English translation of the priority document of the present Application. As the priority application was filed November 28, 2000 as Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-361185, it is respectfully submitted that Takashi may not be considered against the pending claims because the publication date (i.e., December 26, 2000) is later than that of the priority application of the present Application. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 10-15 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

As Applicants have not amended the claims in response to any rejection of these claims based upon newly cited prior art in the next communication, the Official Action of June 4, 2003 **cannot properly be considered a Final Office Action.**

Consequently, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application, including Claims 1-20, are patentably distinguished over the prior art in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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